

A
True Narrative
OF THE
ENGAGEMENT
BETWEEN
His Majesties Fleet,
And that of
HOLLAND.

Begun *June* the First, 1666. at Two
a Clock Afternoon, and continuing till
the Fourth, at Ten a Clock at Night.

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A True Narrative of the Engagement, between His Majesties Fleet, and that of Holland; Begun June the First, 1666. at Two a Clock Afternoon, and continuing till the Fourth, at Ten a Clock at Night.



O contradict false reports of the Enemies, and to rectifie imperfect ones of our own, concerning the late Engagement, it hath been thought fit to publish this following *Narrative*, being very exact in all circumstances, but those of the enemies loss, which we are confident is far greater then is herein expressed, though hitherto most dis-ingeniously and artificially dissembled by them; so that we must be beholding to more time to tell the truth of it, Relating herein onely what was visible to our whole Fleet.

His Highness Prince *Rupert* being gone off from our Fleet the Nine and twentieth of *May*, with Twenty sayl of good Ships, and five Fireships, to joyn with a Squadron of Ten sayl more at *Plymouth*, his Grace the Duke of *Albemarle*, on the One and thirtieth set sayl for the *Gunfleet*, out of the *Downes*, with Fifty four more, and four Fireships, the Wind at N. At Ten of the Clock that Night we Anchored, the *Northforeland* being five Leagues from us, bearing N. W. and by W. there being a fresh Gale at S. W. On Friday the first of *June*, at Four in the Morning we weighed and stood Northward, until Six in the Morn, when the *Northforelands* bore S. W. by S. six Leagues off: The *Bristol* being then four Leagues in the N. E. of us, made Signal that she discovered the Enemies Fleet, and we from Topmast-head made Eight or Ten sayl, which proved the *Hollands* Scouts; at Seven a Council of Flag-Officers was called aboard his Grace, where it was resolved to bear with them, which we did, and at Ten we discovered their Fleet, consisting of 84 sayl. At Eleven the Signall was given to draw into a Line of Battel, and at Twelve being one League

and half in the Wind of them, we bore up with them; they being at Anchor then seven Leagues from *Ostend*, cut loose : All our Fleet bore up upon them, except some of the White Squadron, at half hour after One ; one of the *Dutch* Admirals fired the first Gun at the *Clovetree*, and then the fight began, we standing to the S. Eastward, a fresh gale of Wind at the S. W. so that we could not carry out our Lower Teer, and for fear of the Sands, where we found but fifteen Fathom, we bore up and came to the other Tack ; we continued fighting all that day, till about Ten that Night, having fired four of their great Ships, sunk a Vice-Admiral, and another ship : On our side Rere-Admiral *Harman* was much disabled, having two Fireships on Board him, but by good fortune cleared himself again ; several other of our ships, had their Rigging and Sails very much shattered, and especially the Admiral (his Courage carrying him foremost to all Dangers) to such a degree, as he was forced in the fight of the Enemy to chop to an Anchor, till he had brought new Sayls to the Yards, the old being rendered useless ; which having finished by 8. that night, we cut and cast to the Westward ; as soon as we had gathered way, we tackt and stood through the Body of their Fleet, which by 9. we had done, then tackt to the Westward again. By this time they had taken from us the *Swiftsure*, the *Seven Oakes*, and *Loyal George*, who staying a little behind, were cut from our Fleet. At Ten a Clock they standing Eastward, and we Westward parted for that Night.

Saturday, June 2. at two in the morning, we Tackt, and at three discovered their Fleet on our Lee-bow, and at five, 12. sayl on our Weather-bow, which we supposed a supply, or part of their Fleet which we had severed the Night before ; at 7. we plyed to the Windward to engage the Enemy afresh ; we having the Wind, standing to the Eastward, bore up round upon them and stood to the Westward, they then Tackt and stood to the Eastward ; we then found that we wanted 7. sayl of good Ships that were gone off disabled from our Fleet; nevertheless we engaged very hotly : At 10 we Tackt to the Eastward, and fought through the very Body of their Fleet, and fell

fell hard upon the Leeward-most part of them: Here one of their Rere-Admirals was burnt by the *Young Prince*, a Fireship of ours, and a Vice-Admiral of theirs was boarded by the *Spread-Eagle* fireship, but put off again. At this time the Earl of Ossory, Lord Cavendish, and Sir Tho: Clifford, as Volunteers, came on Board the *Royall Charles* in a Shallop. At two we Tack'd to the Westward, and weathered most of them, and drew our Fleet together; the *Spread-Eagle* then sunk, and many of our Ships being much disabled in their Masts, Sails, and Rigging, they stood for *England*, without acquainting the Generall, who seeing that, thought good likewise to hold our Wind, and make the best of our way home, having no more then 28. sayl of fighting Ships left; which we did, they pursuing of us with 66. Sayl, with a fine Gale at W. S. W. and S. W. Here we burnt the *St. Paul*, taking out her men, fearing she should not keep company with us, having many foot of Water in Hold. At seven at Night they got our Wake, and by Nine came up with most of us, the Wind favoring them two or three Points, so that they came with a Flowing Sheet. At Night it proved calm: By three or four in the Morning a small breeze of Wind sprung up at N. E. and at a Council of Flagg-Officers, his Grace the Lord Generall resolved to draw our Fleet into a Reer-line of Battle, and make a fair Retreat of it. Here his Grace's accustomed and excellent Conduct, as well as his invincible Courage, was eminently seen, for, by placing his weak and disabled Ships before in a Line, and 16. of his greatest and best in a Rank in the Reer, as a Bulwark for them, keeping his own Ship nearest the Enemy, such of the *Dutch* Fleet that were the best saylers of them, came first in parties upon him, and finding it too hot service to attacke him, staid for the rest of their Fleet. They came not within shot of us till Two of the Clock, when presently we from Topmast-head discovered a Fleet, being upon a West by North course; we altered ours to West by South, and W. S. W. to edge with them, supposing them to be the Princes Fleet, as indeed it was. At five we fell foul of the *Gallopier*, where the *Royal Prince* was grounded, and the Leeward Tide set us so far from her, that we could not lie by to relieve her.

On the other side, the Dutch fell so fast upon her, and with their Fireships threatned the boarding of her, that she was forced to strike her Flag for quarter, and so yielded, and when the Dutch had taken out the men, they set her on fire, fearing we should retake her ; for after we had joyned the Princes Fleet, we made up towards them, and they clapt upon a Wind, we following them : The General came to the Prince on board the Royal *James*, and gave His Highness an account of what had hapned in the Three daies action before, and there it was resolved by His Highness and His Grace, at a Council of the Flagg-Officers to fall upon the Enemy the next morning ; and that His Highness with his fresh squadron should lead the Van.

Monday, June the 4. At day-break we found the Dutch Fleet was got out of sight, but we standing a course after them, with a Wind at S. S. W. quickly made them, about five Leagues distant from us upon the Weather-bow, and by Eight a Clock we came up with them ; and they having the Weathergage, put themselves in a Line to the Windward of us.

Our Ships then which were a head of Sir *Cbr. Mings*, made an easie sail, and when they came within a convenient distance lay by, and the Dutch Fleet having put themselves in order, we did the like ; Sir *C. Mings* Vice-Admiral of the Princes Fleet, with his division led the Van, next His Highness with His own division followed, and then Sir *Edm. Spragge* his Rear-Admiral ; and so stayed for the rest of the Fleet which came up in very good order.

By such time as our whole Fleet was come up, we held close upon a Wind, having our Starboard tacks aboard, the Wind S. W. and the Enemy bearing up to fall into the middle of our Line with part of their Fleet, at which, as soon as Sir *C. Mings* had their Wake, he tacked and stood in, and then the whole Line tacked in the Wake of him and stood in ; but Sir *C. Mings* in fighting being put to Leeward, the Prince thought fit to keep the Wind, and so led the whole Line through the middle of the Enemy, the General with the rest of the Fleet following in good order.

And

And here we cannot omit making reflection upon the Prince, who in this Pass was environ'd with as many dangers as the Enemy could apply unto him, they raked him Fore and Aft, plyed him on both sides, and to all that, were just clapping two Fireships upon him, but two of our Fireships that attended the Prince, got betwixt that danger and him, and bravely burnt the bold Assaylants; and though His Highness received very considerable prejudice in that difficult passage, in his Masts and Rigging, yet he answered the shot they powered on him, with as many close returns, which the Enemy felt and carried away with them: and in that whole day, to say no more, the Prince did manifest a Courage and Conduct answerable to the other great Actions, which belong to the story of his Life, whereby he gave spirit to his Friends, and terror to the Enemy.

After this Pass, the Prince being come on the other side, and standing out so as he could weather the end of their Fleet, part of the Enemy bearing up, and the rest tacking, he tacked also, and his Grace tacking at the same time, bore up to the Ships to the Leeward, the Prince following him, and so we stood along backward and forward, the Enemy being some to Leeward, and some to Windward of us; which course was four times repeated, the Enemy always keeping the greatest part of their Fleet to the Windward, but still at so much distance as to be able to reach our Sails and Rigging with their shot, and to keep themselves out of the reach of our Guns, the only advantage they thought fit to take upon us at that time.

But the Fourth time we plying them very sharply with our Leeward Guns in passing, their Windward Ships bore up to the Leeward, to Relieve their Leeward Party, upon which his Highness tacked the Fifth time, and with eight or ten Frigots got to the Windward of the Enemies whole Fleet, and thinking to bear in upon them, his Main-Mast, and Main-top-mast, being terribly shaken, came all by the Board.

His Grace then, with that Part of the Fleet with him, having received in this last Pass two shots in his Powder-Room, and several other in his Main-top-mast, and Fore-mast, that disabled him from Tacking, made up towards the Prince,
and

and he bearing down likewise towards him, seeing the Enemy made what Sayl they could, as if they meant to come betwixt us; but they having made that counterfeit, their Admiral on a sudden fired a Gun, to call in the stragling Remains of his Tatter'd Fleet (who were at this time reduced from Eighty four, to under the number of Forty Sayl) and bore away before the Wind towards *Flushing*. If now those unhappy shots (formerly mentioned) had not disabled, in this last Tack, his Highness, and his Grace's ships, wherein they were in Person, from the pursuit of them, and obliged us to return to our Ports, though (as it is plain) Masters of the Sea in this Engagement, we had, in all humane probability, had a total Victory over the Enemy, with the loss, on our side, only of His Majesty Ship the *Prince*, unhappily sticking upon the Sands, called, the *Galleyer*, that of the *Swissure*, separating from our Fleet in the beginning of the Fight, and the *Essex* intangling herself with the *Bull*, where she bore up bravely to her rescue, and five or six small Ships more, two of which we sunk ourselves (as was likewise said before) which makes ten in number, small and great, when as we are confidently assured from our own observation, and from Letters, that the Enemy lost as many more, three of which were Flag-ships, their Men all sunk and burnt with them. And it is certain, they must every where have suffered a much greater loss of men, than we, from the difference in our manner of Fighting, for they shooting high, and at great distances, damaged us most in our Battering; and we, on the other hand, forbearing to shoot but when we came near, and then levelling most at the Hulls, must needs have done more execution upon their men, the particulars whereof we shall quickly learn: In the mean time, we know they went much Shattered and Torn into their first Ports they could make, and concluded themselves entirely beaten, till from the *Hague* they were told the contrary by those who could know it best.

F I N I S